



Dear Senator Coleman, Representative Fox, and members of the Judiciary Committee,

My name is Andrew Willis, I am the CEO of the Stop Abuse Campaign and I am testifying in support of SB 1033. Childhood sexual abuse is in itself abhorrent but the long term impact on survivors is worse. This bill will address that by allowing victims access to justice. Victims who often need decades to overcome the manipulation, intimidation, and grooming they received as children - in most cases by a family member.

That victims require time to come forward is now an established fact supported by multiple studies.

Statutes of limitations are arbitrary barriers to justice. When they expire, the perpetrator is comforted. The child victim who was not yet able to come forward is silenced.

The public policy is a simple either/or choice: favor the victim or the child abuser. The only way to learn the identity of as many abusers as possible (who can and do abuse into their elderly years) is to give victims the latitude to come forward when they are ready.

I am myself a victim of childhood sexual abuse and through the course of my work I have spoken to thousands of survivors. The trauma of childhood sexual abuse causes untold human suffering; 95% of child abusers were themselves abused as children (Groth), 80% of substance abusers were abused as children (Daytop), 80% of runaways cite child abuse as a factor (Denver Police Dept.), 78% of our prison population were abused as children (Groth), and 95% of prostitutes were sexually abused as children (Conte). Aside from the human cost this abuse is estimated to carry a taxpayer burden of \$400 Billion per annum.

A just system would let the victims come forward when they can. If they are not ready, they simply cannot. Abuse is a long term disability and the burden of proof still sits with the victim.

On behalf of all survivors of abuse I'd ask you to pass this bill.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andrew Willis", with a long horizontal line extending to the left.

Andrew Willis
CEO